

Support strikers

The fight we as students waged last year against cutbacks is now being led by Dal's local of the International Union of Operating Engineers. The same slashing of funds by the provincial government which made our tuition go up is now preventing adequate increases in faculty and staff salaries. We must support the IUOE in this fight.

At Tuesday's emergency "open" Student Council meeting, student union president Robert Sampson said they should talk about other parts of the contract and not about the 5.5% raise, since the Administration can't afford it. When the council voted to go in camera and refused to debate this important issue in front of students, they showed an elitist contempt for their constituency and disdain for democracy. By not giving solid support for the workers at that backroom session, council also did not give solid support for students.

When 1700 students, faculty and support staff marched on Province House last year, the government answered by giving Nova Scotia universities about \$45 extra per student to offset tuition.

Instead of crying about having no money for an adequate raise, the administration should be demanding that the provincial government immediately provide that money. That is a very reasonable demand.

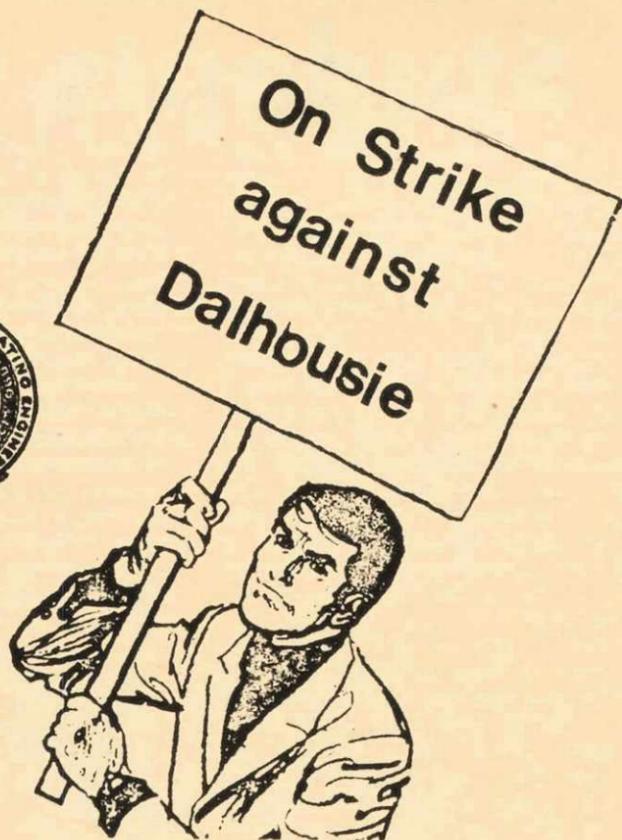
While the provincial government raised its total budgetary spending by 12.5%, it increased its funding to education by only 7%. Also, the federal government last year increased its half of the funding to post-secondary institutions in this province by over 20%. The provincial government took those funds and diverted them to other areas besides education. Cutbacks to education were not in line with other forms of funding—they were arbitrary and severe, with government hoping that nobody would do much about it.

However, the IUOE is. And they may not be the first. Seventy to 75% of university funding goes to salaries. Salary increases will be inadequate across the region and there may be many similar strikes in the near future.

The MPHEC has told us that inadequate government funding will cause yearly tuition increases. Let's hope that when it's our turn to fight, the unions will look at the positive support of the History students, who boycotted classes to show solidarity with IUOE, and not at the Council, who did not even see fit to provide a free room in the SUB for strike headquarters.

A Student Union Executive told a Dal student that "We can't give them a room because they (the Administration) could close us down. They own the building." Instead of having the integrity to stand up to this pressure, our "leaders" seemed to cower in the face of it. Such actions make it increasingly clear whose side the Administration and Council are on.

It is not the IUOE that will be raising our tuition. It is not our demand for equal accessibility to post-secondary education



that will keep their wages low. It will not be the just demands of workers at campuses across the Atlantic that will be the true cause of no heat in Howe Hall. These things will be caused by inadequate government funding. It will be facilitated by those union leaders, student leaders and administrators who sit by without doing anything about it.

The IUOE has taken positive action to fight the cutbacks. If this year's council is going to continue to sell us out by sitting comfortably behind closed doors in the middle of its liberal fence, then we as students will have to lead the fight ourselves.

by Valerie Mansour
and Don Soucy

Coates defends himself

Dear Sir

It has only now come to my attention that an editorial appeared in your October 27th edition, signed by Valerie Mansour, that played fast and loose with the truth regarding my views on the political situation in southern Africa.

The editorial purports to be based on an article that I wrote and which appeared in a number of newspapers, including the Halifax Chronicle-Herald but which [sic] then states, "he praised the 'black homelands' programme of South Africa. . ." Nowhere in the article is there any reference to the "black homeland" policy of the South African government and indeed I have stated on a number of occasions that it is an unworkable concept.

Again Miss Mansour states, "He has visited the country more than

once as a guest of the South African government. . ." Once more Miss Mansour is guilty of playing fast and loose with the truth. Maybe Miss Mansour is recalling I have made two visits to the State of Israel, at my expense.

Lastly it is stated that I have "publicly supported the immoral and illegal activities of a discriminatory government . . ." without having an iota of evidence to back up the claim.

Somehow I had hoped that the degree of excellence that would be part of a university newspaper editorial would surpass even that available in the public press. My only comment is that when Miss Mansour undertakes her next editorial she get her facts straight.

Yours truly,
Robert C. Coates M.P.
House of Commons, Ottawa

Coates defenseless

Editor's Note:

We are utterly at a loss to understand how Robert Coates can claim that nowhere in his article is there any reference to the black homeland policy of the South African government. The greater part of the April 21st article is given over to a defence of that policy in two areas: the Transkei black homeland and Namibia.

Concerning the Transkei black homeland, Coates wrote: "It would not have attained nationhood without the assistance of the South African government. . ." It has the right to become a member of the Commonwealth on the basis of its past history and tradition. Instead of recognizing the authenticity of the Transkei, it has been treated as a leper by the world" (grammatical error in original).

Referring to the South African government's Turnhalle Conference, which aims at setting up tribal homelands in Namibia, Coates said that this is "probably the most significant political happening in Southern Africa of a constructive nature" and

is "the most refreshing experiment in black Africa today."

Coates could not have read our editorial very carefully, for we stated quite explicitly why we considered that he was supporting "immoral and illegal" activities: Robert Coates, we said, "praised the 'black homeland' programme of South Africa as it has been applied in the Transkei. This programme involves the forced deportation of six million persons to barren reservations. Coates further defended South Africa's role in Namibia, despite the fact that the South African occupation of the country has been declared illegal by the International Court of Justice."

We apologize for the error concerning the number of trips that Coates made to South Africa as a guest of that country's minority government. But the main point we made about this still remains—Robert Coates has stated that his trip would help the Conservative Party formulate policy on South Africa (Chronicle-Herald, April 9th, 1977).

the dalhousie
gazette

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